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### REMARKS

Minor corrections have been made to the specification. Claims 1 and 2 have been amended. Claim 3 has been added. Claims 1-3 remain pending. Reconsideration and reexamination of the application, as amended, are requested.

The Examiner rejected claim 1 because of informalities. The informality has been corrected.

The Examiner rejected claim 2 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Examiner's comments have been considered, and claim 2 has been amended.

The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 2 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Lewis (US 5,871,230). The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 2 under 35 USC 102(c) as being anticipated by Brannon et al. (US 6,505,853).

Lewis discloses a lap mounted inflatable bag wherein a seatbelt passes through a passageway in the bag.

Brannon discloses an inflatable curtain wherein a flexible elongated member 90 passes through several apertures 82 in a bag device 14 wherein member 90 has first and second ends 92, 94 fixed to the vehicle side structure 16.

The airbag system of claim 1 requires "an external annular strap which passes through the through hole in the air bag". Neither of the references disclose a ring-like or annular strap such that it passes through a through hole in an air bag. Therefore, the references do not anticipate claim 1. Furthermore, claim 2 depends from claim 1 and is also patentable.

Claim 3 finds basis at page 3, lines 17-19, and page 7, lines 7-22.

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In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and reexamination are requested. Allowance of claims 1-3 at an early date is solicited. Any questions regarding this communication can be directed to the undersigned attorney, Curtis B. Hamre, Reg. No. 29,165 at (612) 455-3802.



Dated: July 19, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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